

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Kelly View School  
other names/site number DHR# 097-0308

**2. Location**

street & number Appalachia Elementary School, Norton Rd. (US Hwy 23) not for publication N/A  
city or town Appalachia vicinity X  
state Virginia code VA county Wise code 195 Zip 24216

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant      nationally      statewide X locally. (      See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date  
**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria. (      See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:      other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_  
     entered in the National Register  
     See continuation sheet.  
     determined eligible for the National Register  
     See continuation sheet.  
     determined not eligible for the National Register  
     removed from the National Register

Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)

☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:

Educational facility Sub: school**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)Cat: vacant/ not in use Sub: \_\_\_\_\_**7. Description****Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)no style**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete block  
roof asphalt  
walls wood  
other wood

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☒ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions) Education, Social History

**Period of Significance** c. 1892 - c. 1959

**Significant Dates** c. 1892 (first load of coal from Wise County); June 1892 (land conveyed to Public School Trustees);  
c. 1959 (building stopped being used for education)

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) n/a

**Cultural Affiliation** n/a

**Architect/Builder** unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary Location of Additional Data**☒ State Historic Preservation Office☐ Other State agency☐ Federal agency☐ Local government☐ University☐ OtherName of repository: VA Department of Historic Resources**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing

1 17 344657 4087988

Zone Easting Northing

2                                See continuation sheet.**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)**11. Form Prepared By**name/title: Michael J. Pulice, Architectural HistorianOrganization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Roanoke Region date February, 2006street & number: 1030 Penmar Ave SE telephone 540-857-7586city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24013**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Wise County School Board, Gregory Killough, Ed.D., Division Superintendentstreet & number 628 Lake Street, P.O. Box 1217 telephone 276. 328. 8017city or town Wise state VA zip code 24293

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Location/Site Description**

Kelly View School is located in the coalfields of far southwestern Virginia, in northwestern Wise County, about 3 miles due north of the Town of Big Stone Gap. Today it is situated on the grounds (east side) of Appalachia Elementary School, built in the 1970s, on the north side of US Hwy 23/Hwy 58 Alternate, which follows the Powell River through the area. The school lies perhaps a tenth of a mile north of the river, and about one mile northwest of the confluence of the Powell River and Roaring Fork. Roaring Fork flows from the north along State Route 603. Most of the surrounding topography, such as Little Stone Mountain (elevation 3439) across the river to the south, and numerous ridges, hollows and strip mines to the north and east, is located within the vast Jefferson National Forest.

**Building Description**

Kelly View School is a small, front-gabled, one-room frame schoolhouse. It rests on a fairly new poured concrete foundation, but the framing, most weatherboards, and interior are of original fabric. The foundation seen in 1923-1924-era photographs consisted of intermittent cobblestone and round log piers. The foundation seen in 1950-60s-era newspaper photographs consisted of intermittent concrete-block piers. The front elevation faces northwest, and has a centered entrance with plain board surround, with a hand-made, carved wood "Kelly View School" sign overhead, which is relatively new. The door is a modern replacement of a 1920s-style 5-panel door. The side elevations have two windows each, spaced some distance apart, with two-over-two double-hung wood sash. While the existing sash look appropriate, photographs of the school appearing in old newspapers show six-over-six sash. The rear elevation has no windows or doors. The roof is a medium-pitch gable roof covered with modern raised-seam sheet metal.

The interior walls and ceiling are treated with rough-sawn flush boards, applied vertically on the walls and from front-to-back on the ceiling, and the original floor, which is well preserved from regular application of linseed oil over the years. Ceiling height is about 9 feet. There is a small built-in cloak closet in the back-right corner of the room, near the teacher's desk. Near the center of the room is the original pot-bellied wood stove that provided heat in the winter. It stands about four feet tall, in a shallow wooden box filled with sand, to catch any hot coals that fall out of the stove. The teacher's desk is at the back of the room, with a small blackboard on the wall behind it. Many antique student desks survive in the schoolhouse, a number of which are of heavy cast iron and well-worn wood, with each desk attached to the back of a chair.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

Kelly View School, a small, one-room frame building, stands as an important vestige of the early educational and social history of the Southern Appalachian coalfields, rural Wise County, and the Kelly View area. The school is now the only surviving pre-World War I non-domestic structure in the community. Rural schoolhouses such as Kelly View School fulfilled important roles in the education and civic life of rural communities in Virginia for generations of students who attended, and for their families whose social/community life was centered there. Accounts of student and community activities at Kelly View School present solid testimony for its educational and social significance. Since the late nineteenth century, the school grounds have been used for myriad social functions and community activities.

### Applicable Criteria

Kelly View School is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Education, because it is a rare surviving example of a one-room schoolhouse in the region, and in the area of Social History because of its central role to the Kelly View community during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout much of the twentieth century.

### Acknowledgements

The following individuals provided valuable information contained herein: Mrs. B.B. Collins, Mr. Gary A. Bush, and Mrs. Vadna Bush.

### Historical Background

Wise County was settled in the early-mid-nineteenth century by mostly Scots-Irish subsistence farmers. Germans were also represented in smaller numbers.<sup>1</sup> The county population remained sparse until the coal boom of the 1890s. The Norfolk and Western Railroad engendered the beginnings of the Wise County towns of Norton, Appalachia, and Big Stone Gap, and the subsequent exploitation of major coal seams in the region. The N&W established a line into the rich Pocahontas coalfields in Tazewell County, Virginia, about 1880. The railroad profited handsomely from transporting vast amounts of high quality coal from Pocahontas and nearby mines, and soon began laying track to the west, into Wise County. The new line was completed to the town of Norton about 1890. Speculation that huge amounts of coal would be encountered throughout Wise County fostered optimism and fueled the growth of numerous small communities. In mid-1891 the Russell Creek Coal Company opened a mine and a company store at the fledgling town of Virginia City the eastern part of the county. This was one of the first, if not the first coal mine in Wise County.<sup>2</sup> The first load of coal was removed from Wise County in 1892, the first load of coke in 1895. The coal boom brought a 500% population increase to Wise County between 1890 and 1920.<sup>3</sup> By the 1920s, the N&W Railroad ran four passenger trains each day between Norton and Bluefield, Virginia.<sup>4</sup>

**Continuation Sheet**

Kelly View, as it became known, was essentially a small section of the county inhabited by a few families, including the Kellys, Golloways, Triggs, Johnsons, Garretts, and McFarlands, within a 3-4 mile radius, between the town of Norton and the small town of Appalachia.<sup>5</sup> According to a deed dated June 10, 1892, a one-acre parcel in the Kelly View area was conveyed to the Public School Trustees of Wise County by “J.J. Kelly, Jr. et ux.”<sup>6</sup> The Kellys lived in a log house within a mile or two’s distance. According to tradition, it was Mr. Kelly who built the school. Another J. J. Kelly attended the school as a boy and later served as the superintendent of Wise County schools for forty years.

In 1898, J. J. Kelly, Jr. sold the mineral rights beneath the school parcel to Lehigh Mining Company. The deed states that Lehigh Co. would not be liable for damages “that may be done to the overlying strata,” so the school may have been moved out of harm’s way at that time, but as far as it is known, the mining company allowed it to remain in its original location.<sup>7</sup> The mineral rights again transferred to the Virginia Coal and Iron Company, which became the Penn Virginia Corporation, in December, 1898.<sup>8</sup> Although it cannot be determined with certainty if the school was built in 1892, photographs labeled 1923-1924 depict the schoolhouse looking much the same as it does today, but with a well-weathered exterior, suggesting that it was standing by the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are surviving photographs of children in front of the school in the 1940s, and a number of students from that era have shared their recollections about the building, teachers, classes, and the tiny community it served.

The school had few amenities—no bathroom or running water—just a water bucket and a dipper. The existing pot-bellied stove heated the room in the winter; the door and windows stayed open in the summer. The older boys were responsible for bringing in the firewood and water, as well as other chores, such as regularly oiling the floors, which gave the room an unpleasant smell that would last for a week. The teacher’s desk was on a little platform. Next to it was a small library on a shelf and a world globe.<sup>9</sup>

Former student, and daughter of two former students of Kelly View School, Vadna Bush (b. Vadna McFarland, 1936), fondly remembers her 3 years at the school, from 1941-1944. Her teacher, whom she remembers as a “wonderful person,” was Ms. Bonnie Rutherford, from Appalachia. Rutherford was preceded by Mr. Lawrence Campbell Fields, and followed by Ms. Ruth L. Raisor. Mrs. Lucy Embrey Wilson also served as a teacher for several years during the late-1950s. They taught grades 1-5 or 1-6, with as many as 36 students appearing in one 1940s-era photo. Teachers of the era had multiple responsibilities. For lunchtime, the teacher often cooked a large kettle of food, such as beans with bacon, on the stove. The students each brought a bowl and spoon with them from home. Mrs. Bush recalls the children being given slices from a big wheel of government cheese during wartime. During the holiday season, the teachers directed the students in Christmas plays.<sup>10</sup>

**Continuation Sheet**

Before the school was moved (a short distance) to make way for the new Appalachia Elementary School circa 1976, the school sat at the top of a small hill, “like an upside-down bowl,” which was entirely unsuitable for ball-playing and other such recess activities. There was no playground or swing set.<sup>11</sup>

Vadna Bush recalls that during World War II, ration books were produced (on a typewriter) in the schoolhouse when school was not in session. The ration books had stamps that could be used when everyday items were needed, such as shoes or other personal items. The books were doled out to adults and children alike. The schoolhouse was open to various other such community purposes year-around. Volunteers assisted with special programs that took place at the school. During the circa 1943-1950s-period, the school housed Sunday worship services, conducted by preacher James L. Jackson. Although he was of the Presbyterian denomination, he simply preached from the bible, and welcomed anyone to his services. He even brought his own wood or coal for the stove.<sup>12</sup>

Kelly View School was taken out of service as an educational facility in 1959 or 1960.<sup>13</sup> For its last few years, it served grades one through four only. A late-1950s photograph shows only 22 students and the teacher. After 1960, the school was used as a place of worship, called Kelly View Church. From then until the 1980s the building was subject to little stewardship, and some loss of historic fabric, such as the front door, occurred. Thereafter, a former student, Danny C. Boggs, and his family, dedicated his time to restoring the old schoolhouse to its former appearance. His hard work was duly recognized in the local newspaper and celebrated by the community.

**Endnotes**

1. *Gone But Not Forgotten*.
2. Wright “Old Virginia City Coal Mine.”
3. *Gone But Not Forgotten*.
4. Shifflett, 32.
5. Mrs. Vadna Bush, personal communication, 1/11/06.
6. Wise County Deed Book 29, page 357.
7. Wise County Deed Book 46, page 207.
8. Wise County Deed Book 48, page 479.
9. Mrs. Vadna Bush, personal communication, 1/11/06.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ms. B.B. Collins, personal communication, 1/7/05.



Continuation Sheet

**9. Bibliography**

Bush, Vadna. Personal Communication, January 11, 2006.

Collins, B.B. personal communication, 1/7/05.

*Gone— but not Forgotten.* Coeburn, Va.: [1979?] Compiled by the adult ed. class of St. Paul, Va.

*Heritage of Wise County and the City of Norton, 1856-2001, Vol. 2,* Wise County High school, 2001.

Miscellaneous un-cited and undated newspaper clippings.

Shifflett, Crandall A. *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960.* Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991.

Wise County Deed Books 29, 46, and 48.

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated parcel includes only the immediate area around the school building. The building itself is pin-pointed as UTM Zone 17, 344657E, 4087988N.

### **Boundary Justification**

The school grounds have changed dramatically since the construction of the consolidated Appalachia Elementary School in the 1970s, therefore the boundary encompasses only the schoolhouse and a few feet around it.

### **Photographs (digital photos, CD included)**

All photographs are of:

Kelly View School (DHR #097-0308) Wise County, Virginia

December 2005

Photographer: Michael J. Pulice

1. VIEW OF: School building exterior-front and south side elevation.
2. VIEW OF: School building exterior-front elevation.
3. VIEW OF: School building exterior-south side elevation.
4. VIEW OF: School building interior-facing rear of building.
5. VIEW OF: School building interior- facing front of building.